

A blessing and a curse – Parashat Re’eh

בְּרָכָה וּקְלָלָה

²⁶See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷the blessing, if you obey (*sh'ma*, i.e., listen) to the commandments of יהוה your Elohim, which I am commanding you today; ²⁸and the curse, if you do not obey (NASB listen) to the commandments of יהוה your Elohim, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known. (Deut 11:26-28)

There are no shortcuts

This week's *Parasha* is *Re'eh* (ראה): “Behold” or “Take a closer look.” The word shares the same root as the verb ‘to see’ (*Roeh*) in Hebrew. It deals with the choices in a life devoted to His *Torah*—the choices that bring life or ultimately bring death. In this *Parasha* we are severely warned against idolatry in its various forms, and we are also given instructions about the food we may or may not partake of, the sabbatical years and reminded about the *moadim*. As I prepared this message, the *Ruach* continually prompted me to remind you that there are no shortcuts. The choices are ever-present before us: we can choose life and blessing or cursing and death.

Do we need reminders? After much meditating and with input (I believe) from the *Ruach Elohim*, I reasoned that many of you that have been with KS for a long time do not need many reminders. After all, I reasoned, many of our families have demonstrated a great commitment to this ministry and to *Adonai*. However, it was as if *Adonai* was asking me ‘Tony, how well do YOU remember?’ As I read over the *Parasha* in preparation for this message, I found many such reminders.

There are certain Scriptural presuppositions (hypotheses) that are at the core of our ministry. One prominent tenet is the desire to walk out (not just talk about) in His ways. Historically, long-term KS people have been people of convictions, commitment and trust. We do not ‘nickel-dime’ one another in our affairs. We understand that *Adonai* is interested in the daily affairs of His people and He is much more than capable in overseeing all matters concerning His flock, which He purchased with His own Blood. But we do need to remember, review and return to His ways in areas where we have digressed from His paths due to the ‘cares’ (stress & influence) of this world. What are the presuppositions that guide our congregation and community in its path toward establishing a foundation of many godly generations?

Yet Another Review of (some of) the Foundations of our KS Ministry

I. CONCERNING ADONAI

- All Scripture is profitable and valuable for walking in His ways:
“¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by G-d and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷so that the man of G-d may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- The Father (*Abba*), the Son (*Yeshua*) and the Spirit (*Ruach Elohim*) do not, can not, and will not change.
“¹⁴I know that everything Elohim does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for Elohim has so worked that men should fear Him.

¹⁵*That which is has been already and that which will be has already been, for God seeks what has passed by.*” (Eccl 3:14-15)

“For I am **אני**, **I change not**; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” (Mal 3:6)

“Yeshua HaMashiach the **same yesterday, and today, and for ever.**” (Heb 13:8)

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with **whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.**” (James 1:17)

- Messiah Yeshua is HaTorah (the Word) made flesh
“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)
- Messiah Yeshua in His earthly life provided for us an example of how to walk in His ways.
“And Yeshua increased in wisdom and stature, and **in favor with God and man.**” (Luke 2:52)

Throughout His life Yeshua demonstrated:

- ✓ **Attentiveness** which builds: Cautiousness, Alertness, Initiative, Creativity, Sensitivity, Resourcefulness
- ✓ **Obedience** which brings: Responsibility, Consistency, Self-Control, Neatness, Diligence, Punctuality, Thoroughness.
- ✓ **Wisdom** which builds: Faith(Trust), Discernment, Discretion, Decisiveness, Justice, Thriftiness
- ✓ **Truthfulness** which is expressed in: Virtue, Purity, Sincerity, Boldness, Persuasiveness, Dependability, Orderliness
- ✓ **Loyalty** which contributes to Dedication, Devotion, Determination, Reverence, Courage, and Endurance
- ✓ **Patience** which has elements of Persistence, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Meekness, Deference, Tolerance, Forgiveness, Compassion, Flexibility, Availability
- ✓ **Gratefulness** which produces Joyfulness, Service, Hospitality, Generosity, Contentment, Enthusiasm, Humility

We note that **all things** happen to **conform us** to the **image of Messiah Yeshua**: ²⁸*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.* ²⁹*For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son....”* (Rom 8:28-29)

We note that when **we lack in character**, it is revealed immediately in **our attitude**.

- The Power to live the lifestyle comes from His Grace: Grace is the desire and the power Adonai gives us to do His will (1 Cor. 15:10)
 1. Grace is given to all (Titus 2:11)
 2. Grace is given free (Eph. 2:8,9)
 3. The more you use the more is given (Phil. 1:2; 2:13)
 4. Grace can be resisted (Heb. 12:15)
 5. Given to the Humble (James 4:16)

- **Biblical Standards Grow Out of: Scriptural Principles, Godly Character, Adonai's Grace, and Scriptural Disciplines.** Our humanistic **society reacts harshly to these type of standards.** But this is precisely **G-d's weapon** against them: "... *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.*" (Isa. 59:19) KS is a congregation striving to be part of that standard He is raising.

II. CONCERNING HIS CONGREGATION

- In His sovereignty, **He has gifted His flock and its members individually.** In particular, He has given each person **one of seven motivational gifts detailed in Romans 12.** If every member has 1 basic motivational gift, we are not all going to be gifted alike nor have identical points of view. **The normal state of affairs in a congregation** is that **one's point of view will be shared by 14.28%** (1 out of 7) and **85.72% will have a different point of view** (6 out of 7).
- Marriage is a **Blood Covenant (B'rith) and NOT a Contract**
 - ⇒ A covenant is based on trust between parties vs. a contract is based on distrust
 - ⇒ A covenant is based on unlimited responsibility vs. a contract is based on limited liability
 - ⇒ A covenant cannot be broken under new circumstances vs. a contract can be voided by mutual consent
- Marriage is the union (*echad*) of the **spirit, soul and body of a man with a woman**
- There are Scriptural guidelines for sexual intimacy in marriage
- The **home (and not the synagogue)** is the center of Messianic Life
- There is a **brutal war against children**
Satan's Hidden Agenda: **To destroy Godly seed** - Gen. 3:15 by the methods of pornography, divorce, abortion, sterilization, sodomy, TV, rock music, violence, etc.
- The goal of Humanistic Medicine: "Controlling human fertility ... by birth control, abortion and sterilization ... people must come to want fewer children" (The Health Care of Women, McGraw-Hill, 1975)
- We must take **personal responsibility in medical matters**
- Five reasons why **some women do not want more children**
 - ⇒ Abusive and Intrusive Birth Procedures
 - ⇒ Rebellious children
 - ⇒ Financial Pressures
 - ⇒ Husband's Attitude Toward Children
 - ⇒ Medical Fears
- **The Strength of a Family is in the Number of Children they Have** (cf. Ps 127)
- **Education needs to be done primarily (and whenever possible) at home**
- **Apprenticeship is in many cases more valuable than a college degree**

III. CONCERNING FINANCES IN HIS PEOPLE

- **Financial Freedom is a goal for EVERYBODY**
- People need to **stop robbing G-d in tithes and offerings**
"⁷From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says Adonai Tzeva'ot. "But you say, 'How shall we return?'⁸"Will a man rob Elohim? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. ⁹"You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! ¹⁰"Bring the whole tithe into the

storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," Adonai Tzeva'ot, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows." (Mal 3:7-12)

¹¹"Then it shall come about that the place in which יהוה your Elohim will choose for His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to יהוה Then there shall be a place which יהוה your Elohim shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto יהוה. (Deut 12:11)

¹⁷You are not allowed to eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or new wine or oil, or the firstborn of your herd or flock, or any of your votive offerings which you vow, or your freewill offerings, or the contribution of your hand. ¹⁸"But you shall eat them before יהוה your Elohim in the place which יהוה your Elohim will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before יהוה your Elohim in all your undertakings." (Deut 12:17-18)

²²You shall surely tithe all the produce from what you sow, which comes out of the field every year (Deut. 14:22)

- There should be **NO DEBT** in the congregation, in business nor in the home
- Some business **partnerships are Un-Scriptural**
- **Co-Signing of Loans is Un-Scriptural**

The 3 R's: Remember, Review, Repent...

- **Everyone Has Blind Spots** – We can **lovingly exhort** one another into good works ⁴¹Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴²Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye." (Luke 6:41-42)
- **We need to ask one another for our blind spots and receive correction in the spirit of Adonai.** I have asked you over the years to point out mine and Marilyn's blind spots-will you extend to us the same courtesy (to point out your blind spots) for the body's sake?
- **G-d will not change His standards for our situations.** We need to strive to do things G-d's way no matter what the price. Do not expect G-d to give an answer in prayer for something He has already specified in Scripture. We need to pray thusly: "*L-rd, give me the grace to do Thy Will*" (John 17)
- The Torah of Adonai is Perfect Converting the Soul (Psalm 19)

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse. A blessing, if you obey the commandments of יהוה your Elohim, which I command you this day: And a curse, if you will not obey the commandments of יהוה your Elohim. I strive to show you an example-follow me as I follow Messiah.